

To:

The Distinguished Congressman Jim McDermott (D-WA), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support of the Committee on Ways and Means

From:

Stuart Goulter

RE: Hearing on Responding to Long-Term Unemployment

Dear Congressman McDermott,

I am writing you and your esteemed colleagues in the hopes of shedding some much needed light on the plight facing millions of hard working Americans who are still unemployed because of the 2008 financial crisis. Today, there are more families facing an uncertain future, through no fault of their own, because their jobs were eliminated due a financial collapse and ensuing economic erosion, the magnitude of which has not seen since the late 1920's.

I am regrettably unemployed (since June of '08) and have exhausted all of my State & Federal Unemployment Insurance. I am now referred to as a 99'er. I'm a college graduate with 20 years experience in business analysis, unable to find even a temporary job doing the most basic office work – for near minimum wage.

Ever since I was laid off (due to lagging revenue, not because of my performance. *I actually received a 114% performance bonus shortly before being let go*), I have applied for, in my best estimation, close to 1,200 jobs. So far, I've had four interviews on the phone, two physical interviews, and no job offers.

Early in my search, I came to realize that I wasn't going to find anything comparable to my modest salary and I focused on finding a position that would provide the bare necessities to keep my wife and I in our small home. Unfortunately, there are many people in the same situation. Recruiters that I've spoken to tell me that they receive -on average- 150 responses for each job they post. My wife's employer received 180 responses in one day alone, for a receptionist position. The recruiters have told me that some employers are able to hire ridiculously over-qualified people because the pool of candidates is so vast. Others say that employers are afraid to hire people with too much experience, because they will only leave as soon as something better comes along. All I know is that I've signed up with a dozen staffing firms (not recruiters, but temp agencies) and none have been able to find anything for me so far. With no income or extended Unemployment Insurance, we will be tapping into our meager 401k just to keep the lights on.

What I want you and the committee to understand is this: **the overwhelming majority of unemployed Americans want to work**. They desire a job that challenges them and allows them to learn, grow, and provide for their families. They want to **earn** the American Dream. Faced with the current state of the economy, many are willing to take jobs offering 50% less pay than they had before, but the jobs just aren't there.

What I need you and the committee to realize is this: **millions of unemployed Americans and their families are now at the precipice, on the brink of becoming homeless and destitute**. They are in despair. They are without hope of keeping their homes and apartments. They passed that point. They are budgeting their remaining savings in terms of meals and not days.

What the committee must do is take decisive action. These people need help from their government urgently.

Arguments against extending Unemployment Insurance and debate over the deficit will only act to castigate these families and bring about a deeper and extended peril for the nation as a whole. We need to extend a bridge between current despair and future stability. Without it, there isn't a future for any of these families.

- No one is looking for a hand out. They need a lifeline.
- Please help the American citizens who need your help now, more than ever.

God bless America & those less fortunate than us.

Sincerely,

Stuart W. Goulter